

# Autism Services program class of 2019



Fourteen students from The Children's Home of Cincinnati's Autism Services program graduated May 20 with their high school diplomas at a ceremony in the gymnasium located on The Children's Home main campus.

Families, supporters, friends and partners of the organization practically filled the gym to its seating capacity to cheer the students on.

The featured guest speaker was retired FC Cincinnati forward Omar Cummings, who previously completed an internship at The Children's Home and, following his retirement from professional soccer, he joined the front office of FC Cincinnati where he works on youth academy and community initiatives.

"I once heard someone say that getting an education was a great gift," Cummings said, during his remarks. "Over the years, I have learned that I disagree. You have worked extremely hard to get here; you have paid with the effort of learning new skills and days in front of open books. Yes, an education is a gift; but, it's a gift each of you outstanding young men and women have 100 percent earned."

The Children's Home Autism Services program is licensed by the state to grant (CONTINUED)





bona fide high school diplomas to students who earn them, just like a traditional school setting. But how the school teaches these unique young men and women are what separates it from other programs.

“One key component of our program is that we assume competence from our students and we capitalize on their abilities and strengths,” said Amanda Tipkemper, The Children’s Home of Cincinnati’s autism services director. “This life milestone reflects tenacity and hard work by our graduates, their families, and the dedication of our staff. With their diploma in hand, they now have a key to the next door, whether it leads to college or directly into the workforce.”

Cummings encouraged the graduates to take what they learned at The Children’s

Home with them as they begin the next phase of their life’s journey.

“As you leave here today, I hope you will continue to embrace the values and lessons you have learned here,” Cummings said. “I hope you all become the most caring, compassionate, truthful, far-seeing and selfless men and women you possibly can.

“I’m very proud that you represent the Children’s Home of Cincinnati; because, I look forward to being part of a community that will be transformed by each of you,” he said. “You are truly the right people to make our home a better place.”

The Children’s Home Autism Services program is increasing its enrollment to serve more children and young adults on the autism spectrum. To learn more, visit [www.thechildrenshomecinti.org/page/autism-services](http://www.thechildrenshomecinti.org/page/autism-services).

